



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESS RELEASE
GOVERNMENT RECOVERS
\$6.5 MILLION SETTLEMENT
IN BOY SCOUT FIRE CASE

SALT LAKE CITY – The U.S. Attorney’s Office has settled a federal lawsuit seeking to recover suppression and rehabilitation costs from a fire that scorched more than 14,000 acres in the Uinta Mountains near the East Fork of the Bear Scout Reservation in June 2002. Having reached a compromise, the parties in the lawsuit are now asking a federal judge to dismiss the lawsuit.

The Great Salt Lake Council, Inc., Boy Scouts of America, the remaining defendant in the case, paid the federal government \$6.5 million to settle the lawsuit. The LDS Church was dismissed as a defendant in the case in February.

The stipulation for dismissal was filed today in U.S. District Court. The order must still be signed by U.S. District Judge Tena Campbell.

“This office takes seriously its responsibility to protect public lands for the use of all citizens, including Utah's majestic national forests. Our responsibility also includes recovering, for the benefit of all taxpayers, the

millions of dollars expended to suppress wildfires intentionally or negligently caused - no matter who is responsible,” U.S. Attorney for Utah Brett L. Tolman said. “Such wildfires not only devastate the landscape of Utah, but jeopardize lives and private property as well.”

Tolman said he appreciates the efforts of everyone involved in reaching an appropriate resolution of the lawsuit.

The lawsuit filed by the U.S. Attorney’s Office alleged that boys from an LDS Church-sponsored Boy Scout troop started the forest fire. The government claimed that the Salt Lake Boy Scout Council was in charge of supervising the scouts at the time the fire started and failed to do so.

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